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THE LADY OF THE HEAVENS.

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(Continued.)

"We mean, Teacher," she replied,
smiling, "that we have heard that
Ibubesi is courting the beautiful Zoola,
the daughter of your head wife, and
we thought that you would be likely
to come to arrange about the cattle that
he must pay for her. Doubtless if
she is so fair, it will be a whole herd."

"This was too much, even for Mr.
Dove."
"How dare you talk so, you heathen
hussies?" he gasped. "Where is the
white man?"
"Teacher," she replied with indigna-
tion, and drawing herself up, "why do
you call us bad names? We are re-
spectable women, the wives of your
husbands, as respectable as your own,
although not so numerous, or, so we
hear from Ibubesi. If you desire to
see our young sister, she whom he
married last month, we wish you
good-day, as we go to hoe our lord's
fields, and we hope that when she
comes the inkosazana, your daughter,
will not be as rude as you are, for if
so, how shall we love her as we
wish to do?" Then wrapping her blan-
ket round her with a dignified air, the
offended lady stalked off, followed by
her various "sisters."

As for Mr. Dove, who for once in his
life was in a towering rage, he cur-
sored viciously, with the sjambok or
hippopotamus-hide whip which he car-
ried, and followed by his guides, gal-
loped away to a big hut in the cen-
ter of the kraal.

Apparently Ishmael heard the sound
of his horse's hoofs for as the mission-
ary was dismounting, he perceived the
of the bee-hole of the hut upon his
hands and knees, as a Kaffir dove fol-
lowed by a young woman in the light-
eat of who was wearing a headband,
though she had just been aroused from
sleep. What is more, except for the
color of his skin, he was a Kaffir and
nothing else, for his dress consisted
of a skin moucha such as the natives
wear and a fur kaross thrown over his
shoulders. Straightening himself, Ish-
mael saw that the girl was the wife
of his visitor. His jaw dropped, and he
uttered an ejaculation that need not
be recorded, then stood silent. Mr.
Dove was silent also; for his wrath
would not allow him to speak.

"How do you do, sir?" Ishmael
jerked out at last. "You are an early
bird, and find me somewhat unpre-
pared. I had known that you were
coming, I would—then suddenly he
remembered his attire, or the lack of
it, and his companion who was leaning
on his shoulder, and peering into the
white man over it. Drawing the
kaross tightly about him, he gave the
poor girl a backward kick, and with a
Kaffir cat's back he made her dis-
appear hurriedly. "I am afraid my
dress is not quite what you are ac-
customed to, but among these poor
heathens I find it necessary to con-
form more or less to their ways in
order to gain their confidence and—
unaffection. Will you come into the
hut? My servant there will get you
some tywaia (Kaffir beer)—I mean
some amasi (curdled milk) at once,
and I will have a calf killed for break-
fast."

Mr. Dove could bear it no longer.
"Ishmael, or Smith, or Ibubesi—
whichever name you may prefer," he
broke out, "do me the kindness to
your servant, for now I know all the
truth, which I refused to believe when
my daughter and Nonha told it me.
You are a black-and-white, and you
yesterday you dared to come and
ask Rachel to marry you, and now
I find that you are living—oh! I can-
not say it, it makes me ashamed of
my race. Listen to me, sir. If ever
you dare to set foot in Ramah again,
or to speak to my wife and daughter,
the Kaffirs shall find you in the
place. Indeed," he added, shaking his
sjambok in Ishmael's face, "although
I am an older man than you are,
were it not for my office I would give
you the thrashing you deserve."

At first Ishmael had shrunk beneath
this torrent of invective, but the
threat of violence roused his native
nature. His face grew evil, and his
long black hair and beard bristled
with wrath.

"You had best get out of this, you
prayer-smuggling old hussies," he
said savagely, "for if you stop much longer
I will make you sing another tune.
We have sea-cow whips here, too, and
you shall learn what a hideous means,
such a hiding that your own family
won't know you, if you live to get
back to them. Look here, I offered
to marry your daughter, or the square,
and I meant what I said. I'd have
got rid of all this black baggage, and
she should have been the only one.
Well, I'll marry her yet, only now
she'll just take her place with the
others. We are all one flesh and blood,
black and white, ain't we? I have
often heard you preach that God what
will she have to complain of?"
he sneered. "She can go and hoe meales
like the rest."

As this brutal talk fell upon his ears
Mr. Dove's reason departed from him
entirely. After all he was an English
gentleman first, and a clergyman af-
terwards; also he loved his daughter,
and to hear her spoken of like this
was intolerable to him, as it would
have been to any father. Lifting the
sjambok he cut Ishmael across the
mouth so sharply that the blood came
from his lips, then suddenly remember-
ing that this deed would probably
mean his death, stood still awaiting
the issue. As it chanced it did not,
for the man, like most brutes and bul-
lies was a coward, as Rachel had al-
ready found out. Obeying his first
impulse he sprang at the clergyman
with an oath, then seeing that his two
guides, who carried assegais, had
ranged themselves behind him, he checked
himself, for he feared lest those spears
should pierce his heart.

"You are in my house," he said,
wiping the blood from his beard, "and
an old man, so I can't kill you as I
would anyone else. But you have
made me your enemy now, you fool,
and others can. I have protected you
so far for your daughter's sake, but I
don't do it any longer. You think of
that when you time comes."

"My time, like yours, will come,
when God wills," answered Mr. Dove,
unflinchingly; "not when you or any-
one else wills. I do not fear you in
the least. Still, I am sorry that I
struck you; it was a sin of which I
repent as I pray that you repent."

Then he mounted his horse and rode
away from the kraal at a gallop.

When Mr. Dove reached Ramah he
only said to Rachel that what she had
heard was quite true, and that he had
forgotten the house. Of course, however,
Noie soon learned the whole story from the Kaffir guides,
and repeated it to her mistress. To
his wife, on the other hand, he told
everything, with the result that she
was very much disturbed. She point-
ed out to him that this white outcast
was a most dangerous man who would
certainly be revenged upon him in one
way or another. Again she implored
him, as she had often done before, to
leave these savage countries where he
had labored for all the best years of
his life, saying that it was not right
that he should expose their daughter
to the risks of them.

"I answered her husband, 'you
have often told me that you were sure
no harm would come to Rachel, and I
think that too.'"

"Yes, dear, I am sure; still, for
many reasons it does not seem right
to keep her here." She did not add,
poor unselfish, that before she reached
her she should be considered as

well as Rachel.

"How can I go away," he went on
excitedly, "just when all the seed that
I have sown is ripening to harvest?
If I did so, my work would be utterly
lost, and my people relapse into bar-
barism again. I am not afraid of
this man, or of anything that he can
do to my body, but if I ran away from
him it would be injuring my soul, and
what account should I give of my cow-
ardice when my time comes? Do you
go, my love, and take Rachel with
you if you wish, leaving me to finish
my work alone."

But now, as before, Mrs. Dove would
not go, and Rachel, when she was ask-
ed, shrugged her shoulders and an-
swered laughing that she was not
afraid of anybody or anything, and
except for her mother's sake, did not
care whether she went or stayed.

Certainly she would not leave her, nor
she said, did she wish to say good-
bye to Africa.

When she was asked why, she re-
plied vaguely that she had grown up
there, and it was her home. But her
mother, catching her, said that she
knew enough that she had another reason,
although no word of it ever passed her
lips, she had met Richard Darrien as a
child, and in Africa and nowhere else
she believed she would meet him again
as a woman.

Two weeks and months went by,
bringing to the household no sight or
tidings of the white man, Ishmael.
They heard through the Kaffirs, in-
deed, that although he still lived in
the kraal, he had been driven away
had gone away on some trading jour-
ney far to the north, and did not ex-
pect to return for a year, news at
least, which was not true, for he had
who shook her little head and said
nothing.

So all fear of the man gradually died
away, and things went very peaceful
and prosperous at Ramah.

In fact this quiet proved to be but
the lull before the storm.

Two months and months before
Mr. Dove had visited the kraal Ra-
mah, another embassy came to Rachel
from the Zulu king, Dingaan, bringing
with it a present of the white man,
Ishmael. She received them as she had
done before, at night and alone, for
they refused to speak to her in the
daytime, and she was not to be seen.

In substance their position was the
same that it had been before, namely,
that she would visit Zululand, as the
king had desired her, and she would
set upon an important matter. When
asked what this matter was they either
were, or pretended to be, ignorant,
saying that they had never been con-
fided in, and that they were not to
them. Thereon she said that if
Dingaan chose to submit the question
to her by messenger, she would give
him her opinion on it, but that she
could not possibly be with him, as she
knew why, seeing that the whole na-
tion would guard her, and no hair of
her head be harmed.

"Because I am a child in the house
of my people, and they will not allow
me to leave even for a day," she an-
swered, thinking that this reply would
appeal to the king's sense, and would
be in obedience to parents and every
established authority.

"Is it so?" remarked the old induna
who spoke as Dingaan's spokesman.
Mopo, but another. "Now, how can
the inkosazana-y-Zoola, before whom
a whole nation will bow, be in bonds
under the hand of a man? Shall we
doctor?" Shall the wide heavens open
a cloud?"

"If they are bred of that cloud," re-
torted Rachel.

"The heavens bred the cloud, not the
cloud the heavens," answered the in-
duna aptly.

Now it occurred to Rachel that this
thing was going further than it should.
To be set up as a kind of guardian
spirit to the Zulus had seemed a very
good joke, and naturally appealed to
the love of power which is common to
women. But when it involved at any
rate in the eyes of that people, domi-
on over her own people, she was
was, she felt, becoming serious. So
she determined suddenly to bring it to
an end.

"What mean you, Messenger of the
King?" she asked. "I am but the
child of my parents, and the parents
are greater than the child, and must
be obeyed of her."

"Inkosazana," answered the old man
with a deprecating smile, "if it please
you to tell us such tales, our ears must
listen to it if it pleased you to order
us to be killed, we must be killed. But
learn that we know the truth. We
know how as a child you came down
from the mountain, and how these
white people with whom you dwell
found you lying in the mist on the
mountain top, and took you to their
house, and a place of a babe whom
they had buried."

"Who told you that story?" asked
Rachel amazed.

"The white people," he replied to the
council of the doctors, Lady.

"Then that was revealed which is
not true. I was born as other women
are, and my name of Lady of the
Heavens came to me by chance, as by
chance I resemble the Spirit of your
people."

"I hear you," answer the 'Mouth'
politely. "You were born as other
women are, by chance you had your
high name, by chance you are tall and
fair and golden-haired like the Spirit
of our people. We hear you."

Then Rachel gave it up.

"Bear my words to the King," she
said, and they rose, saluted her with a
Bayete, that royal salute which never
before had been given to woman, and
departed.

When they had gone Rachel went in
to supper and told her parents all the
story. Mr. Dove, now that she seemed
to take a serious view of the matter,
affected to treat it as absurd, al-
though when she had laughed, his atti-
tude, it may be remembered, was dif-
ferent. He talked of the silly Zulu
superstitions, showed how they had
twisted up the story of the death of
her baby brother, and her escape from
the flood in the Umvatana river, into
that which they had named to her.
He even suggested that the whole
thing was nonsense, part of some polit-
ical move to enable the King, or a
king in the state, to declare that they
had with them the word of their tradi-
tional Spirit and oracle.

Mrs. Dove, however, who that night
was strangely distressed and uneasy,
thought far otherwise. She pointed
out that they were playing with vast
and cruel forces, and that whatever
the result might be, she believed that
Rachel, it was a dreadful thing for a
girl to be put in a position in which
the lives of hundreds might hang upon
her nod.

"Yes, and," she added, hysterically,
"perhaps our own lives also—perhaps
our own lives also."

To change the conversation, which
was growing painful Rachel asked if
anyone had seen Noie. Her father
answered that two hours ago, just be-
fore the embassy arrived, he had met
her going down to the banks of the
stream, as he supposed to gather flow-
ers for the table. Then she began to
talk of the girl, saying what a
sweet creature she was, and how
strange it seemed to him that although
she appeared to accept all the doc-
trines of the Christian faith, as yet
she had never consented to be bap-
tized.

It was while he was speaking thus
that a faintly observed her mother
fall forward, so that her body
rested on the table, as though a kind
of fit had seized her. Rachel sprang to
assist her, but before she reached her
she appeared to have quite recovered,

only her face looked very white.
"What on earth is the matter, moth-
er?"
"Oh! don't ask me," she answered,
"a terrible thing, a sort of fancy that
came to me from talking about those
Zulus. I thought I saw this place all
red with blood and tongues of fire
licking it up. It went as quickly as it
came, and of course I know that it is
nonsense."

CHAPTER IX. The Taking of Noie.

Presently Mrs. Dove, who seemed to
have quite recovered from her curious
seizure, went to bed.

"I don't like it, father," said Rachel
when the door had closed behind her.
"Of course it is contrary to experi-
ence, and all that, but I believe that
mother is foresighted."

"Nonsense, dear, nonsense," said her
father. "It is her Scotch superstition,
that is all. We have been married for
five and twenty years now, and I have
heard of this sort of thing again and
again, but although we have lived in
wild places where anything might hap-
pen to us, nothing out of the way ever
has happened; in fact, we have always
been most mercifully preserved."

"That's true, father, still I am not
sure; perhaps because I am rather that
way myself sometimes. Thus I know
that she is right about what we will
will happen to me, at least no perma-
nent harm. I feel that I shall live out
my life, as I feel something else."

"What else, Rachel?"
"Do you remember the lad, Richard
Darrien?" she asked, coloring a little.
"What? The boy who was with you
that night on the island? Yes, I re-
member him, although I have not
thought of him for years."

"Well, I feel that I shall see him
again."

"Dove laughed. 'Is that all?' he
said. 'If he is still alive and in Af-
rica, it wouldn't be very wonderful if
you did, would it? And at any rate, of
course, you will one day hear him
cease to be alive. Really,' he added,
with irritation, 'there are enough
bothers in life without rubbish of this
kind, which comes from living among
savages and absorbing their ideas. I
am beginning to think that I shall
have to give way and leave Africa,
though it will break my heart, still,
when, after all the striving, my efforts
are being crowned with success.'"

"I have always told you, father, that
I don't want to leave Africa; still,
there is mother to be considered. Her
health is not what it was."

"Well," he said impatiently, "I will
talk to her and weigh the thing. Per-
haps she shall receive guidance, though
for my part I cannot see what it mat-
ters. We've got to die some time, and
I prefer that to the thought that I shall
be while doing my duty. Take no
thought for the morrow, succumb unto
the day is the evil thereof. I have always
been for my motto, who am content with
what it pleases Providence to send me."

Then Rachel, seeing no use in con-
tinuing the conversation, bade him
good night and went to bed. For Noie,
only to discover that she was not in
the house. This disturbed her very
much, although it occurred to her that
the friends comely with her friends
the village, hiding till she was sure
the Zulu embassy had gone. So she
went to bed without troubling her fa-
ther.

At daybreak next morning she rose,
not having slept very well, and went
out to look for the girl, without suc-
cess, for no one had heard or seen
anything of her. As she was return-
ing to the house, however, she met a
solitary Zulu, a dignified middle-aged
man, whom she thought she recog-
nized as one of the embassy, although
of this she could not be sure, as she
had only seen these people in the
moonlight. The man, who was quite
unarmed, except for a kerri which he
carried, crouched down on catching
sight of her in token of respect. As
she approached he rose, and gave her
the royal salute. Then she was sure.
"Speak," she said.

"Inkosazana," he answered humbly,
"be not angry with me. I am
Tamboosa, one of the King's induna.
You saw me with the others last
night."

"How you?"

"Inkosazana, there has been dwell-
ing with you one Noie, the daughter
of Seyapo, the wizard, who with all
his house was slain at this place by
order of the King. She should have
been slain, but we have learned that
you called down lightning from Heav-
en, and that with it you slew the sol-
dier who had run her down, slew him
and burned him up, as you had the
right to do, and took the girl to be
your slave, as you had the right to
do."

"Speak on," said Rachel, showing
none of the surprise which she felt.

"Inkosazana, we know that you
have come to this girl. Therefore,
yesterday before we spoke with
you we seized her as we were com-
manded, and hid her away, awaiting
your answer to our message. Had
you consented to visit the King at his
Great Place, we would have let her
go. But as you did not consent my
companions have taken her to the
King."

"An ill deed. What more, Tamboosa?"

"This," the King says by my mouth.
—Let the inkosazana come and com-
mand, and her servant Noie shall go
free and unharmed, for is she not a
dog in her hut? But if she comes not
and of course, then the girl dies."
"How know I that this tale is true,
Tamboosa?" asked Rachel, controlling
herself with an effort, for she loved
Noie dearly.

"The man turned towards some bushes
that grew at a distance of about
twenty paces, and cried: 'Come hither.'"

Thereon from among the bushes
where she lay hidden, rose a little
maid of about fourteen, whom Rachel
knew well as a girl that Noie often
took with her to carry baskets and
other things.

"Tell now the tale of the taking of
Noie and deliver the message that she
gave to you," commanded Tamboosa.

(To be Continued.)

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